



**JUNE
McCRACKEN**

St. John's **CONNECTIONS**

A monthly update from the people of St. John's UCC, Fullerton

Volume 19 • Issue 169 • October 2026

Table of Contents

30th Annual Road Rally	33
Adult Faith Formation Opportunities	7
A Fresh Approach to Generosity	18
Applebee's Burgers For A Cause	29
Bosco's Shopping Pass "Friends Helping Friends"	36
Budget Update.	50
Convalescent & Homebound Residents	25
Deadline for November Newsletter.	3
Donations Needed Now For Our Bazaar.	30
Entered the Church Eternal	21
Faith Formation & Worship Celebrations!	6
Get a Keepsake from St. John's.	36
Gobble, Gobble, Gobble.	38
Greater Allentown CROP Hunger Walk	45
Have You Seen Our New Prayer Shawl Displays?	22
Hear-Ye, Hear-Ye!	35
How did St. John's Family do?	47
IronPigs Fundraising Opportunity for St. John's.	31
Lady PEEPS	38
Medical Debt Relief Fundraiser a Huge Success	48
Men's Breakfast Group	38
Mitten Tree "Operation Santa" Coming Soon	47
Music at St. John's: New Beginnings	10
Neighbors in Need	44
October Birthdays	42
October Wedding Anniversaries	43
Ordination Celebration for Samantha Kistler	15
Other Outreaches	47
Our Story of Generosity	24
Our Worship Schedule	13
Pastie Sale	40
Pastor Becky Article.	36
Prayer that Expresses Our Love	37
Reminder: RaiseRight Orders Due	21
Sharing Our Sacred Stories of God.	4
Staff Contacts.	51
St. John's Gift Card Bingo	28
St. John's Kitchen Corner.	23
The Keystone Connection	16
Trunk Or Treat.	34
Verso-Chat	32
Welcoming Friends And Growing Our Community	20
Whitehall-Coplay Hunger Initiative	46
Whitehall Food Pantry.	45
Your Grocery Shopping Benefits St. John's	39

On The Cover...



JUNE MCCRACKEN

My name is June McCracken. I've lived in Allentown all my life. I worked at the Allentown Public Library for 46 years.

I grew up at Salem UCC. Emmanuel UCC was my church for many years til it closed.

My sister Karen and I visited several churches and found St. John's to be our new home.

My hobbies are reading, sewing and jigsaw puzzles. p.s. I was born in April!

Deadline for November Newsletter

If you would like to contribute an article for the November newsletter, please email newsletter@sjuccf.org by Sunday, October 11.

If you have photos to accompany your story, please attach them to your email. Comments and suggestions are always welcome!

[Style guide can be found here](#)

Sharing Our Sacred Stories of God

Stories are at the heart of who we are as people of faith.

The sacred stories of Scripture help us discover, again and again, who God is and how God moves in the world. We hear stories of creation and covenant, liberation and hope, courage and compassion. We gather around the stories of Jesus — stories of welcome, healing, generosity, justice, love, grace and hope — and through them, we come to better understand the heart of God. But the sacred story is not only something we read about in the Bible.

God is still writing stories among us.

Each of us carries stories of moments when we have experienced God's presence: times when we have been strengthened when we were weary, surrounded by love when we felt alone, forgiven when we needed grace, or inspired to do something we never imagined we could do. We have stories of people who have helped shape our faith and stories of this church community becoming the hands and feet of Christ in the world.

Those stories are vital to our life and re-formation of our faith again and again with each generation. When we share our sacred stories, we remind one another that God is still at work. We discover that faith is not simply something we believe. Church is not simply a place we attend. They are things we experience, live, and share together and they transform us.

As we reflect on generosity and our shared ministry this September and October, I hope we will also take time to tell those stories. What has God done in your life? How has this community of faith made a difference? Where have you seen compassion, inclusion, healing, hope, or love come alive through the ministry we share?

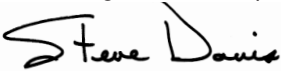
Our stories help us recognize the connection between gratitude and generosity. When we remember how God has blessed and shaped us, our hearts naturally begin to ask how we might participate in what God is doing next, and be partners with God and each other.

Every gift of time, talent, service, and financial support becomes part of a larger story. Together, our generosity helps make worship possible, welcomes new people, nurtures children and adults in faith, cares for those who are hurting, and extends Christ's love into our community and world. And perhaps that is one of the most beautiful things about the church: our individual stories become part of God's larger story.

As we look toward the year ahead, I invite you to prayerfully consider your own story of gratitude and generosity. Consider what matters most to you and how God may be calling you to participate in the ministry we share. Where is our heart moved by God? Along the way, share your story with someone else. We have some friends in the congregation who will be helping us experience their stories and our own. You never know how your story of God's faithfulness, grace, and love might become exactly the story of hope someone else needs to hear.

Our stories are sacred. Our stories connect us. And together, our stories continue to tell the good news of a God who is still creating, transforming, healing, and loving the world. Thank you for the many ways you already share your life and your gifts through our congregation. Your generosity helps tell the story of a community seeking to **Worship, Love and Serve**
— **No Matter What!**

Yours in grace and hope,



Rev. Steven Davis, Senior Pastor



Faith Formation & Worship Celebrations!

Growing in Faith Together (G.I.F.T.) Confirmation Sunday - 9/27



growing in faith together
celebrating every gift

A year of learning, fellowship, service, and faith formation has brought our 2025–2026 Confirmation Class to a joyful and meaningful milestone: the confirmation of Ryan Szoke in his own expression of faith and his welcome as a full member of St. John's UCC, Fullerton.

Throughout this past year, Ryan and the other members of our G.I.F.T. Confirmation Class have shared faith lessons and life stories while spending many hours learning, serving, participating, and growing together. This Confirmation experience has been a shared ministry among three congregations — Grace UCC in Allentown, UCC Greenawalds, and St. John's UCC, Fullerton — collaborating and bringing young people together to explore what it means to live and grow in faith.

Confirmation is not simply the end of a year of classes and activities. It is a celebration of a young person claiming the faith for themselves and beginning a new chapter of participation in the life and ministry of the church.

We invite you to join us for worship on September 27 as we celebrate Ryan's confirmation. Ryan, featured as our cover person for the month of September, will affirm his faith and be welcomed as a full member of our congregation.

We also give thanks for Bill Fink, who has faithfully served as Ryan's mentor, as well as Ryan's family, who have participated in worship and other activities with him to encourage and support Ryan throughout this journey. The encouragement, conversation, and relationships shared between mentors, families, leaders and confirmands are an important reminder that faith is something we learn and live together.

Please join us as we celebrate Ryan, give thanks for his journey, and surround him with the love, encouragement, and prayers of our St. John's UCC, Fullerton church family!

Adult Faith Formation Opportunities

Come curious. Get connected. Grow in faith.

Faith is not something we ever finish learning. There is always another question to explore, another story to share, another perspective to consider, and another way God is inviting us to grow.

At St. John's, we believe our faith grows best when we share together. It happens not only through worship and Scripture, but through honest conversation, shared experiences, laughter, questions, and relationships that help us recognize God's presence in our lives and in the world around us.

This fall, we invite you to discover — or rediscover — the joy of Adult Faith Formation at St. John's. Our Fall opportunities will explore Faith and Generosity, inviting us to reflect on what we treasure, where our hearts are drawn, and how our faith shapes the way we live - how we worship, love, serve, and participate in God's work in the world.

We don't need to have all the answers. We don't need to be Bible experts. Just come as you are and meet welcoming friends.

Just come curious. Come to deepen your faith. Come to meet someone new. Come to share your questions and your story. Come to listen, learn, laugh, and grow together. There is a place for you at the table.

Come curious. Get connected. Grow in faith.

Friendship Class

Sundays at 8:15am in Room 201

Start your Sunday with coffee, donuts, good conversation, and good friends! The Friendship Class gathers each week in a relaxed and welcoming setting where questions are welcome, stories are shared, and faith grows through conversation and connection.

This fall, we'll explore Faith and Generosity, reflecting together on what we treasure, what gives our lives meaning, and how our faith shapes the way we live and share our lives with others.

Whether you've been part of the Friendship Class for years or you're joining us for the first time, there's a place for you at the table. Bring your questions, your experiences, and your curiosity — and come enjoy the simple joy of learning, growing, and building friendships together.

Come curious. Get connected. Grow in faith.

Reflections

Sundays at 11:00am in Fox Hall

A New Opportunity for Faith Conversations

What did you hear in worship today? What question stayed with you? Where did the Scripture, music, or sermon connect with your own life?

Like light passing through a prism, sometimes we discover new colors and dimensions when we look at something from a different angle. Reflections offers an opportunity to do just that—to take what we have experienced in worship and explore it together from different perspectives.

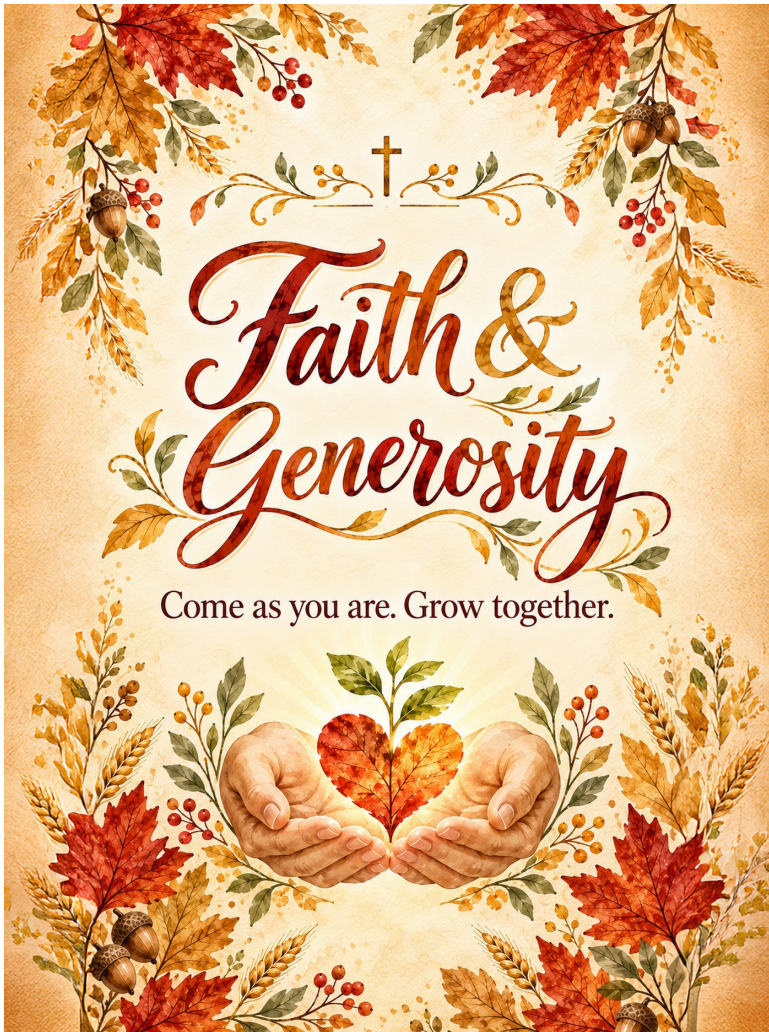
After worship, grab some refreshments during Sunday Social in Fox Hall, then join us at the designated table near the kitchen and coffee. In this relaxed setting, members of our Pastoral Team and Generosity Team will help guide a conversation around the morning's Scripture, theme, and sermon.

This isn't about having the "right" answer. It's about wondering together, listening to one another, asking good questions, and discovering how God's Word continues to speak into our lives.

Come with a thought. Come with a question. Come simply to listen.

Stay a little longer. Linger with the Word. Connect with one another. Grow in faith. There's room at the table for you.

Come curious. Get connected. Grow in faith.



Music at St. John's: New Beginnings

More Than Just a Number: Finding Your Place in Our Music Ministry

Have you ever sat in the pews, felt the music wash over you, and wondered what it would be like to be a part of creating that beauty? Have you ever caught yourself tapping along to the handbells or humming with the choir and asked yourself, what is really keeping me from getting involved?

When I first stepped into the role of Director of Music here at St. John's, I knew we had a beautiful journey ahead of us. Over our time together, it has been an absolute privilege to watch our ensembles grow, develop, and nurture a deeply rooted sense of community. The handbell choir has grown from a dedicated core of 4 ringers to a vibrant group of 7. Our vocal choir has blossomed from 15 voices to a beautifully robust 24. Nurturing this growth and tackling the musical challenges that we've taken on has been incredibly rewarding.

Yet, as our ensembles have flourished, a recurring question often weighs on my mind: why is it still so challenging to find new members ready to take the leap and commit?

The reality of any ministry is that it is deeply affected by the unpredictable rhythm of daily life. We all know what happens when life simply takes over. Well-deserved vacations are planned, family comes to town, or seasonal colds make their rounds. Suddenly, a Sunday morning arrives where our soprano section of 6 is down to just 3, or our powerful alto section of 7 dwindles to 2 overnight.

It is in these vulnerable moments that the true nature of our commitment becomes crystal clear.

When you join the choir or the handbells, you aren't just filling a seat or blending into a background crowd. The joys and accomplishments of this ministry go far beyond singing the right notes or ringing at the right time. There is a profound, shared accomplishment that comes from working together week after week to master a beautiful piece of music and offering it up in praise. You gain a family that laughs together in rehearsals, supports one another through life's hurdles, and shares the unmatched thrill of lifting the congregation's spirits.

So, I invite you to look inward and ask the hard questions: What is holding you back? Is it the fear of not being "good enough"? Is it the hesitation of adding one more thing to your schedule?

The truth is, we need you. When sections shrink on a Sunday morning because life happens, it becomes stunningly apparent that every single person matters. In a world where it is so easy to feel lost in the crowd, the music ministry offers something wonderfully different. Here, you are never just a statistic on a roster.

To the St. John's music ministry, YOU are the difference, not a number. Your voice, your hands, and your heart are the missing pieces to our harmony. We have a seat waiting just for you.

With immense gratitude,

Patrick



Service of the
Nativity

AN EVENING OF
REFLECTION AND SONG

Sunday,
December 20th
at 5:30 PM

"For unto us a child is born,
unto us a son is given."
ISAIAH 9:6

 **St. John's**
— UCC, FULLERTON —
575 Grape Street • Whitehall, PA 18052
www.stjohnsuccfullerton.org

 (610) 264-8421 |  UNITED CHURCH
OF CHRIST

October Worship Theme



"Where your treasure is,
there your heart
will be also..."
- Matthew 6:21

Our fall theme of Faith and Generosity continues to guide our worship. We join with Christians from across the world in celebrating who we are together at God's ever expanding table of love.

Hear the stories of those around us sharing their own experience and trust in God. Listen to their personal connection with God who so generously invites us to join God in being the change-makers in the world around us.



OUR WORSHIP SCHEDULE

SEPTEMBER 27 - CONFIRMATION SUNDAY

"There Our Hearts Will Be!"

**WORSHIP WITH HOLY COMMUNION
WITH REV. STEVE DAVIS PREACHING**

Lectionary Connection:

Proverbs 3:1-12 and Philippians 2:1-5

"Living Your Best Life"

Focus: Trust, Humility and the Mind of Christ. Confirmation is the beginning of our next step as followers of Jesus.

OCTOBER 4 - WORLD COMMUNION SUNDAY

"There Our Hearts Will Be!"

**WORSHIP WITH HOLY COMMUNION
WITH REV. STEVE DAVIS PREACHING**

Lectionary Connection:

Mark 8:27-38 and Philippians 3:10-14

"Hidden Treasure, Open Cross: Generosity Beyond Applause"

Focus: Faithful discipleship and fruitful community.

OCTOBER 11

"There Our Hearts Will Be!"

**WORSHIP WITH HOLY COMMUNION
WITH REV. STEVE DAVIS PREACHING**

Lectionary Connection:

John 14:1-14 and Isaiah 25:1-9

"God's hospitality, comfort, and victory"

Focus: The "someone" through whom God will transform the world... that "someone" is YOU!

OCTOBER 18 - CHILDREN'S SABBATH - PRESENTING BIBLES

"There Our Hearts Will Be!"
WORSHIP WITH HOLY COMMUNION
WITH REV. STEVE DAVIS PREACHING

Lectionary Connection:
1 Corinthians 2:1-16 and Isaiah 45

"Divine wisdom and God's sovereignty"

*Focus: Our lives are a collection of faithful actions that declare
another way of being God's people in the world.
We live by hope, grace and generosity.*

OCTOBER 25 - GENEROSITY COMMITMENT SUNDAY

"There Our Hearts Will Be!"
WORSHIP WITH HOLY COMMUNION
WITH REV. STEVE DAVIS PREACHING

Lectionary Connection:
2 Corinthians 4:5-12 and Psalm 90

"Human weakness and God's eternal strength."

*Focus: We are transformed by joining in making
God's world a better place for all.*

• • • • •
•
• Thank you to Roger •
• Schneck, who was •
• featured on the June •
• cover of St. John's •
• CONNECTIONS, •
• for sponsoring this •
• October issue! •
• • • • •



**St. John's
CONNECTIONS**
A monthly update from the people of St. John's UCC, Fullerton

Volume 19 • Issue 165 • June 2026

Ordination Celebration for Samantha Kistler

With her successful, unanimous approval for ordination and authorization as a minister in the United Church of Christ at her Ecclesiastical Council on September 19 at St. John's, we can now look forward to calling her Pastor Sam and Rev. Samantha Kistler!

Sam has chosen to be ordained in her home church, St. Peter's UCC, Tamaqua tentatively on Sunday 11/1 at 3pm. The St. John's family is invited to share in this joyful celebration.

As we look toward Sam's next chapter in ministry, Wendy Fox, along with Elders Paul Raszler, Colleen Kulhammer, and Linda Powell, are preparing a Call Agreement outlining her expanded ministry with St. John's. The agreement will then be presented to the Consistory and congregation for consideration.

We have come to deeply appreciate Sam's spirit of collaboration, partnership, and joyful service. We are grateful for the many ways she has shared her gifts with our congregation and excited about the ways God is continuing to call and equip her for ministry.

We celebrate this important milestone with Sam and look forward to welcoming her into this next chapter among us as Pastor Sam and Rev. Samantha Kistler!



The Keystone Connection

Building Connections Close to Home

Save the Date — Mountain Valley Association Fall Meeting

Saturday, November 7, 2026

Lower Saucon United Church of Christ

Mark your calendars! This fall, churches from across the Mountain Valley Association will gather for a time of worship, fellowship, learning, conversation, and shared ministry.

More details — including the agenda, registration information, and reports — will be available closer to the time of meeting. In the meantime, we encourage St. John's to begin thinking about who might serve as our delegates and how we can participate in the life and ministry of our Association.

WHY DOES THE ASSOCIATION MATTER?

With the formation of the Keystone Conference, it can be easy to wonder, "What exactly is the role of the Association?"

Think of it this way: the Keystone Conference connects us across Pennsylvania; the Mountain Valley Association connects us close to home.

The Conference provides resources and ministries that serve UCC congregations throughout Pennsylvania, while our Association brings neighboring churches together to build relationships, share ideas and resources, support one another in ministry, and discover opportunities to work together.

Through our Association, congregations can participate in shared worship and educational opportunities, support pastors and those discerning calls to ministry, strengthen local congregational life, and simply get to know the people who are doing ministry alongside us.

We are stronger when we know one another, learn from one another, and serve together.

THERE'S A PLACE FOR YOU

The Fall Meeting is more than conducting Association business. It is an opportunity to meet new people, reconnect with neighboring

congregations, share what is happening at St. John's, and discover where God may be opening doors for shared ministry.

Volunteers are also needed for the Planning Committee, including Worship, IT, Registration, and Venue teams, as well as Tellers and a Parliamentarian. Additional opportunities are available through the Nominating Committee, Oversight Working Group, Authorization Working Group, and Planning Committee. If you are interested in volunteering, contact Pastor James Robison at jamdarrob@gmail.com.

Let's strengthen our Keystone Connection — by building relationships, sharing our gifts, and participating in the ministry we do together.

OUR MINISTRY IS STRONGER WHEN WE PARTICIPATE TOGETHER.

As we strengthen our connections with neighboring UCC congregations through the Mountain Valley Association, we are also invited to support the ministry we share through intentional giving.

Our congregation's Our Church's Wider Mission (OCWM) contributions support the broader ministry of the United Church of Christ through the Keystone Conference and beyond. The Mountain Valley Association, however, does not receive operating funds from OCWM. Its ministry depends upon the intentional generosity of member congregations and individuals.

We want St. John's to faithfully support the ongoing work of the Mountain Valley Association, with contributions made separately and clearly designated "Mountain Valley Association" or "MVA" in our monthly support. Note your gifts accordingly when giving through St. John's.

Our support helps make possible the Association's work of strengthening congregations, supporting clergy and those preparing for ministry, developing leaders, creating opportunities for learning and fellowship, and building relationships among our neighboring churches.

This is more than supporting an organization. It is an investment in the relationships and shared ministry that help the UCC thrive close to home.

Thank you for the many ways you participate in the wider ministry of the United Church of Christ. Together, we can continue to build connections, share our gifts, and discover what God can do through our churches working side by side.

Let's continue to grow together in faith, relationship, service, and mission.

A Fresh Approach to Generosity

Since the first quarter of 2026, the Stewardship and Finance Committee has been looking for fresh ways for our St. John's community to look at our ministries and how we share our support as a congregation. We have tried to provide a wide variety of examples of the generosity of the congregation as we share stories each week in worship. Stewardship is about so much more than just meeting our financial goals. Instead, we focus on what matters most to us as the people of God... what we hold as priorities and what drives our sense of outreach... what helps us achieve our mission as the Body of Christ?

With the help of Rev. Bob Stevens, we looked at how we might look at preparing a budget and seeking funding for it with a new approach. What we've been doing over the last few years has been helpful as Sue Weldner and the S&F Committee present what we've hoped would be a reachable goal. We always tried to be mindful of abilities and resources, while also recognizing that many of us struggle financially, so we look at other ways to supplement and support the Church's ministries. Again, all of these efforts have been helpful, yet we've not see the financial increase we've hoped might be possible. Nevertheless, we trust God and we faithfully moved forward.

God is the source of generosity... and through the life and example of Jesus, we respond to God with our lives, abilities and resources. In September we introduced the theme of our Generosity Emphasis... "There Our Hearts Will Be!" You've been invited to deeper conversation groups after worship, invited to study scripture together, invited to hear stories from other friends in the St. John's community who are sharing their lives and stories of why this church matters to them. They're sharing what they value most and how they respond in faith. Our Consistory has been asked to lead the way for us by all committing to take part in this new approach. Like all of us, they want to respond faithfully and joyfully to God.

In the next few weeks of September and October, we will hear the stories of our friends in worship. We will read their stories of what matters to them. And we will be invited to try something new as individuals and families. You'll soon receive a letter sharing some

materials for your private consideration related to your giving. Our Financial Secretary, Michelle Gutekunst, has helped the Stewardship & Finance Committee and Generosity team with some graphs and statistical information we hope you'll find helpful in identifying where you are in your current level of support for the ministries of St. John's. You'll have opportunity to consider how you might take a step up in your generosity.

Then on Sunday, October 25, we will all be given the opportunity to present our own Estimate of Giving card for dedication to God. Michelle will calculate the estimates from what you turn in toward our estimate of funding support anticipated for 2027. We're asking EVERYONE to return an Estimate of Giving Card by Sunday, October 25. With the total gifts being shared by Michelle to the Stewardship and Finance Committee (just the total, not who intends to give what) a final Proposed Budget will be presented to the Consistory for recommendation to the congregation for our Fall Meeting on November 15, when we elect 2027 Consistory members and adopt our budget for 2027. Rev. Dr. Becky Beckwith will be our preacher for the morning and lead us in what we believe will be a decisive moment of faith for St. John's UCC, Fullerton.

You're invited to participate in the ministry of your church. Every person, every gift, every action of support in ministry matters as we seek to fulfill the mission given to us by God, led by Christ and inspired by the Holy Spirit. What we do next will guide us for the coming year and we want YOU to be involved.

Plan now to be present every week in October, and join the church family in this demonstration of generosity as we share our estimates of giving to fund our ministries and share our intention to
Worship, Love and Serve — No Matter What!



Welcoming Friends And Growing Our Community

Next Joining Classes on October 4-5 and October 11-12

You are... WELCOME HERE!

One of the great joys of being a community of faith is watching new relationships take root and seeing people discover a place where they can belong, grow, and share their gifts. At St. John's UCC, Fullerton, we celebrate every person who walks through our doors and becomes part of our shared journey of faith.

You may have noticed some new faces in worship over the summer months. Friends from many different places have begun worshipping with us as they discern where God is leading them in their next steps of faith. We are grateful for each person who has found their way to St. John's, and we invite you to continue building friendships, discovering your place, and sharing in ministry with us. Some have already transferred their membership, while others are prayerfully considering making St. John's their faith home.

If you are ready to explore that next step, our upcoming Joining Classes offer a welcoming opportunity to learn more about St. John's, meet others who are making the same journey, and consider what it means to unite with us in faith and ministry.

JOINING CLASS OPPORTUNITIES:

- October 4 at 11 am — in person, Pastor Steve's office
- October 11 at 11 am — in person, Pastor Steve's office
- October 5 at 10am — Zoom or in person, Pastor Steve's office
- October 12 at 6:30pm — Zoom or in person, Pastor Steve's office

Every new face is an opportunity to practice what we proclaim. At St. John's, radical hospitality means more than simply saying hello. It means creating a community where people know they are valued, their stories matter, their questions are welcome, and their gifts have a place.

When we say, "You are... WELCOME HERE!" we mean it.

If you are considering making St. John's UCC, Fullerton, your faith home or if you simply want to learn more about who we are, what we believe, and how you might become more connected, we would love to hear from you. Contact the church office or speak with Pastor Steve.

There is always room for one more at the table. We would love to welcome you home to St. John's!

Entered the Church Eternal



"I have fought the good fight; I have finished the race; I have kept the faith. From now on there is reserved for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, will give me on that day, and not only to me but also to all who have longed for his appearing."

- 2 Timothy 4:7-8

We remember Shirley Downing (91) and pray for her family. Shirley had been living in Trinity, Florida to be closer to family for her care. She passed away August 29, 2026.

<https://www.legacy.com/us/obituaries/wfmz/name/shirley-downing-obituary?id=62334237>



RaiseRight.

Reminder: RaiseRight Orders Due

If you wish to purchase gift cards from RaiseRight, all orders and payment are due no later than September 30. Checks are payable to St. John's. As soon as the gift cards arrive, everyone who placed an order will be notified for pickup. Any questions contact Karen Stoitsis at (610) 262-0746 or email littlekdr@yahoo.com

Have You Seen Our New Prayer Shawl Displays?

As you enter the sanctuary, take a moment to notice the new displays of Prayer Shawls along the back railings. Each one represents a prayer, a caring heart, and a tangible expression of God's love.

Our Prayer Shawl Ministry offers a simple but powerful reminder: no one journeys alone. Each shawl and prayer square is lovingly handcrafted, prayed over, and blessed before being shared with someone experiencing illness, grief, or another season when comfort and hope are especially needed.

This ministry reaches beyond St. John's. Through our support of area school students, staff and administrators; through pastoral care visits and hospital visits, we have been sharing tangible reminders that St. John's is a praying faith family. We want people to know we care and and praying for them to know God's nearness and love.

We are especially grateful for the caring hands of Connie Viglione, Emilie Moyer, Nancy Weaver, and Donna Held, and others whose creativity and dedication help extend God's love — one stitch at a time — to people in hospitals and other settings, both near and far.

There is room for more caring hands! If you know someone who might be encouraged by a Prayer Shawl or Prayer Square, please contact the church office. You may request a shawl to be presented in worship for our collective prayers. And if you would like to join this ministry through knitting, crocheting, quilting, or simply learning, we would love to welcome you.

Take a look at the shawls. Feel the prayers woven into each one. And consider how you might add your own caring hands to this beautiful ministry. Together, stitch by stitch and prayer by prayer, we wrap our community in God's love.



St. John's Kitchen Corner

Welcome back to St. John's kitchen, where the aroma of fresh brewed coffee and delicious baked goods beacons to one and all on any given Sunday morning. The Sunday Social Hour which takes place in Fox Hall every Sunday after the service began again on September 6th. We usually

average between 40-60 people each Sunday. This is a place to relax, share news with each other, laugh and eat! Thanks to the many special volunteers who have hosted in the past few years, we have been treated to some amazing and creative food along with warm and cold beverages.

As I continue to tell those who volunteer, it does not matter how much food is provided. It does not matter if you are creative with it. It does not matter if it is homemade or store bought. St. John's people are happy to share the 2 fish and 5 loaves, a large plate of cookies, healthy snacks or the abundance of many items from those who are theme driven! This is a time to share a cup of coffee or juice with friends. I would love to see more volunteers to host in this coming year. If you would like to host just find someone to do it with you and the burden will seem much lighter. All you have to provide is the snack food items.

The kitchen provides the drinks and paper goods. I set up the tables on Saturday and make the coffee on Sundays. I am ALWAYS here to help out and guide you through the process and through the kitchen.

Thank you once again to all who have hosted and assisted in making St. John's kitchen a happy kitchen!

Colleen Kulhamer

Our Story of Generosity

"There Our Hearts Will Be" **Stewardship Testimonial 2026**

By Paul Raszler

Our fall stewardship program "There Our Hearts Will Be" is based on Jesus' words in the Sermon on the Mount. I think to myself what "treasures" do I have that will help others, secure the future of St. John's, and give me a happy heart.

Having been born in Austria and coming to the United States at five years old, it was through Church World Service that brought my parents and me to the United States as refugees. That inclines me to give through the many 5-for-5 offerings of the UCC to help displaced families, victims of disasters and wars.

When my family came here, we stayed with a minister's family. It took my father time until he got a job so we could find a place of our own and able to put food on the table. That is why we give through St. John's to the local food bank with food contributions and volunteering there monthly, Our Church's Wider Mission, and the Mountain Valley Association (formerly Penn Northeast Conference).

Being so grateful to St. John's for taking in church members when Dubbs Memorial UCC closed its doors back in 2015, I felt the need to continue in my weekly giving at my new church home. In the past 11 years my family has been here, I've seen times when it's become hard to meet monthly budgets and times when committees need more members to serve. In my heart, I knew I had to increase my weekly giving to support the many ministries of St. John's. That included my financial support of the building of the pavilion and Property Committee repairs like the elevator.

In my heart I also knew I could not just stand by. I was honored to be asked to serve on Consistory and currently serve as your President. Having served in a management position, I thought I could help on the Personnel Committee. Since I retired, I made the time to help at the Whitehall Food Pantry and volunteer for the "Fun-Raising" and Mission Committee when needed. Although I'm not the greatest singer, as Patrick can attest, I still find enjoyment by singing on the Choir.

You might think you have no talent or don't know enough to serve, but you will be amazed at what you can accomplish or what ideas you might inspire.

For St. John's to continue its ministries and its outreach to the community, I would ask you to consider how you can share your resources by increasing your giving and becoming involved in at least one of the many committees offered at our church. You might meet people you didn't know and find new friends.



Convalescent & Homebound Residents

People who would welcome receiving a greeting card:

Phyllis Ambearle
Anita Beil
Frank Csaszar
Phyllis Csaszar
Milton Focht
Sally Gibson

Tracey Glass
Lucille Hicks
Geraldine Keim
Dale Millham
Karen Moyer
Mary Jane Ott

Helen Ryer
Bert Smith
Leona Snyder
Nancy Weaver
Bonnie Weikel

To protect privacy, please contact the church office for a listing with mailing addresses.

October

4 8:15am Friendship Class Room 201 9:30am Neighbors in Need/World Communion Sunday 11:00am New Member Class 1:30pm Road Rally	5 10:00am New Member Class	6 10:00am Staff Meeting Room 201 6:30pm Stewardship & Finance Committee	7 9:00am Verso Chat w 12:00pm Painting Gro 6:00pm Girl Scouts 6:00pm Painting Gro 6:30pm Zumba 7:00pm SAA Recovery
11 NEWSLETTER DEADLINE 8:15am Friendship Class Room 201 9:30am 20th Sunday after Pentecost 11:00am New Member Class	12 OFFICE CLOSED - INDIGENOUS PEOPLES DAY 6:30pm New Member Class	13 10:00am Staff Meeting Room 201 1:00pm Staff Meeting 6:00pm Bells Sanctuary 6:00pm Elders 7:00pm Consistory	14 9:00am Verso Chat w 12:00pm Painting Gro 6:00pm Girl Scouts 6:00pm Painting Gro 6:30pm Zumba 7:00pm SAA Recovery
18 8:15am Friendship Class Room 201 9:30am Children's Sabbath 1:30pm Crop Walk	19 6:00pm "Fun-Raising" Committee	20 9:00am Newsletter Collating 10:00am Staff Meeting Room 201	21 8:00am Boscov's "Fri 9:00am Verso Chat w 12:00pm Painting Gro 6:00pm Girl Scouts 6:00pm Painting Gro 6:30pm Zumba 7:00pm SAA Recovery
25 ESTIMATE OF GIVING DUE PASTIE ORDERS DUE 8:15am Friendship Class Room 201 9:30am 22nd Sunday after Pentecost	26 9:00am Food Pantry 5:30pm Food Pantry	27 10:00am Staff Meeting Room 201 6:00pm Bells	28 9:00am Verso Chat w 12:00pm Painting Gro 6:00pm Girl Scouts 6:00pm Painting Gro 6:30pm Zumba 7:00pm SAA Recovery

er 2026

	1 9:30am Visitation Committee 6:30pm Choir	2 5:00pm St. George School	3 8:30am Men's Breakfast Hamilton Family Restaurant 9:30am Zumba
7 with Pastor Steve up up Room 301 y Group Room 301	8 6:30pm Choir	9 5:00pm St. George School	10 9:30am Zumba
14 with Pastor Steve up up Room 301 y Group Room 301	15 BINGO SETUP FOX HALL 6:30pm Choir	16 5:00pm St. George School 6:00pm Halloween Gift Card BINGO Fox Hall	17 9:30am Zumba
1 ends Helping Friends" with Pastor Steve up up Room 301 y Group Room 301	22 6:30pm Choir 6:30pm Property Committee	23 5:00pm St. George School	24 9:30am Zumba
8 with Pastor Steve up up Room 301 y Group Room 301	29 6:30pm Choir	30 5:00pm St. George School 6:00pm Trunk or Treat Pavilion	31 9:30am Zumba

St. John's Gift Card Bingo

Join us for an evening of bingo, fun and laughter—with chances to win gift cards to local restaurants and stores!

Tickets are available now. See Tom Moyer or stop by the church office.



DONATIONS NEEDED:

- Tricky Tray items valued at \$20–\$30
- Game sponsorships: \$50
- Pierogi casserole
- Coca-Cola brand sodas
- Bottled water
- Hamburger barbecue

Your donations will help make this evening a success—and we hope you'll join us for the fun! Mark your calendar, invite someone to share your table and come dressed for the occasion.

Dear St. John's United Church of Christ,

Thank you for your thoughtful support in your donation of \$585.00 to Undue Medical Debt! Your gift will make an incredible impact by abolishing crippling medical debt and providing a fresh start for so many lives in your local community and across the country. We, along with over 31 million beneficiaries and their families, are profoundly grateful for your compassionate action. Your generosity has enabled Undue Medical Debt to abolish more than \$49 billion in medical debt since its inception. On behalf of those whose lives you've lifted, thank you!

With gratitude,
Marisa Clemente
Vice President, Philanthropy
Undue Medical Debt

Applebee's Burgers For A Cause

Now available! Each \$10 certificate is good for the purchase of any burger on Applebee's menu. Most of their burgers cost much more than \$10, so this sale is a great deal for you, and for St. John's. They also make great stocking stuffers.

Please see Carol Raszler or Tom Moyer to purchase these certificates, or call the church office.



Donations Needed Now For Our Bazaar!



Listed below are the types of items we are collecting:

Small Appliances	Glassware	Pots & Pans
Attic Treasures	Household Furnishings	Purses
Books	Jewelry	Puzzles
CDs	Kitchen Utensils	Seasonal Decor
Crafts	Knick Knacks	Tools
Dishes	Linens	Toys & Games

If you have items that fit these categories that you no longer want or need, please bring them in and drop them off in the office, Fox Hall, or give to Amy Feidler or Carol Raszler. Items must be clean and in working order. All sales, except 10% for Mission, will go towards St. John's and meeting this year's budget. Deadline to receive items is October 31.

Please note that we are NOT collecting the following: clothing, encyclopedias, furniture, magazines, records, bowling balls, TV's, computers, monitors, and printers.

We are asking for volunteers to help sort and price items during the week of November 8. Come anytime during the day or early evening. In addition, volunteers are also needed on the day of the Bazaar to help man booths and help in the kitchen.

Donations of baked goods and homemade candies are requested. Our crafters "Keeping You in Stitches" will have a large assortment of handmade items available to sell.

If you would like more information on this event; have a question on what we are collecting; need items to be picked up; or would like to volunteer to help, please contact our Co-chairs Amy Feidler and Carol Raszler. Amy can be reached at (835) 210-5944 or alfeidler@gmail.com and Carol at (610) 393-7572 or craszler@aol.com.



SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 14
9am-2pm IN FOX HALL
CRAFTS • ATTIC &
YARD SALE TREASURES
BAKED GOODS • CANDY SALE
COME HAVE FUN, SHOP
AND STAY FOR LUNCH!

IronPigs Fundraising Opportunity for St. John's

Want to Join the Volunteer Group Team?

Operating a concession stand at sporting events has proven to be an excellent fund-raising source for non-profit organizations at dozens of stadiums and arenas across the country. An organized and well-motivated group can earn hundreds of dollars per game for their organization. In addition, you get to participate in the excitement of IronPigs baseball at Coca Cola Park (renamed Jefferson Park).

The Volunteer Group Program at IronPigs is to schedule non-profit groups to supplement their hourly employees to work events at the park. Our church members would work at the concession stands or portable kiosks during events and will earn an hourly rate. A contribution will be made to St. John's of \$12/hr. multiplied by the total number of hours worked by all the volunteers. No volunteer will receive personal compensation.

The "Fun-Raising" Committee is considering forming a Volunteer Group from St. John's for the 2027 season. To participate, here are some things you need to know:

1. Age requirement is 14 and older. Identification is required. Children under the age of 16 may only participate in events Friday through Sunday while in school and can only volunteer until 9pm. Each volunteer is required to sign in and sign out at each event.
2. Volunteers serving alcohol must be 18 years of age—proof of age required. No volunteer is allowed to consume alcoholic beverages on the grounds of the facility.
3. Volunteers will be given work assignments upon arrival at the park as well as quick on-site training. There is no guarantee the volunteers will be working as a group and may be disbursed individually throughout the park as needed.
4. Volunteers are to report approximately two hours prior to the start of the game to cook the food and/or prepare the stations for selling. Each group member is required to stay until the station chores and cleaning are completed.
5. There is a strict dress code for shirts, pants, & shoes. Hats will be provided and are mandatory.

If you might be interested in becoming a volunteer to join the St. John's Volunteer Group or have questions, please contact Amy Feidler. Christina Bach, who's a member of St. John's custodial staff, volunteered this past year for a charity and is an excellent source to also answer any questions you may have.



Come curious.
Bring your questions.
Join the conversation.

Each Wednesday, Verso-Chat gathers around the Scripture readings that will shape our worship in the weeks ahead. Together, we explore the texts from different perspectives and wonder how these ancient words continue to speak to our lives today.

As we enter October, our conversations will connect with Faith and Generosity, exploring how Scripture invites us toward grounding, grace, gratitude, and growth.

No special preparation or biblical expertise is needed. Bring your Bible, your questions, and your willingness to listen and share. Each conversation stands on its own, so join us whenever you're able. And who knows? Your insight might even find its way into a Sunday sermon!

Contact Pastor Steve or Samara Bush in the church office for more information and the Zoom connection.

This fall, make a little more room in your life for Faith Formation.

Come curious. Get connected. Grow in faith.



30th Annual Road Rally

It's ROAD RALLY time! This event is scheduled for Sunday, October 4, starting at 1:30pm from the Pavilion parking lot. Fill your car up with gas, ditch the map, follow the directions provided, and come for a lovely autumn drive. But be aware! You need to look for clues to answer questions along the way. The end result?—a good time with family and friends at a place to eat with good food and perhaps a chance to win some prizes too. A sign-up sheet is on the bulletin board in the lounge area. See DonnaLee Yeatts if you have any questions.



Trunk Or Treat

On Friday, October 30th, join us at the pavilion parking lot between 6pm-8pm for a fun and spooky evening of Trunk or Treat! You can dress up if you like and decorate your car any way you like to hand out candy and treats to all the neighborhood ghosts and goblins. The Pavilion will be decorated with The Nightmare Before Christmas theme and there will be something warm to eat and cold to drink. This is such a fun evening with St. John's friends and lots of smiling children.

If you would like to decorate your car and hand out candy, please see Colleen Kulhamer and let her know you plan on joining in the fun!



Hear-Ye, Hear-Ye!

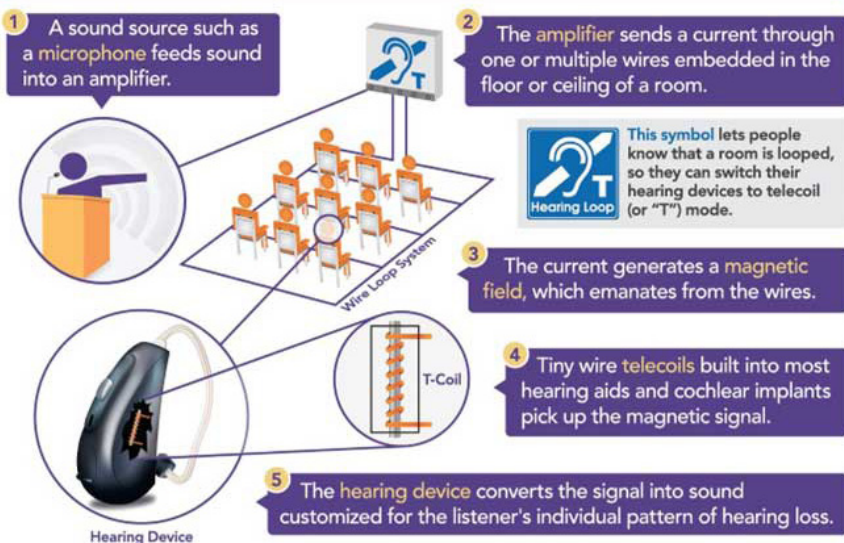
I am very excited to learn of the new telecoil hearing system, commonly known as a Loop, that has just been installed in our church. The church I attended this summer in Cloudcroft, New Mexico installed a loop many years ago, and it was and is again life-changing for me. I had worn hearing aids for many years and currently have two cochlear implants, so I was able to use the telecoil system with my implants. I was able to hear the sermon for the first time in eons as well as the announcements, the scripture being read, and for the first time I knew what was going on. I became a part of the church in a new way.

If you are among those people who wear newer hearing aids, I would encourage you to simply have your audiologist enable the telecoil capability and show you how to use it. If you have older hearing aids, I would strongly urge you to upgrade your hearing aids to have this capability. It will be well worth the expense and your worship experience will be life-changing.

I hope you are blessed,

Jackie Maxon

How a Hearing Loop System Works



For those who would like to access the sound from a hearing loop system, but **do not have a hearing device or whose hearing device does not have a telecoil**, hearing loop receivers with headphones or earbuds are available to borrow from the venue.

Boscov's Shopping Pass "Friends Helping Friends"

A big shopping day could be yours at Boscov's. It's for Wednesday, October 21, from 8:00am to 11:00pm. Purchase a \$5.00 shopping pass from St. John's, and the church gets to keep the funds. This pass entitles you to 25% off the lowest sales price, in-store and online, and cannot be used in conjunction with other discounts and promotions. Present the pass at check-out and receive your discount. Also register for a chance to win a \$100 Boscov's gift card by scanning the QR code on the shopping pass with your phone. To get your pass, see Ginny Brokenshire or Carol Raszler before or after worship.



Get a Keepsake from St. John's

Thanks to our member Pete Mohr. He used his woodworking skills and created a wonderful palm-held cross out of the old oak pews that were in the sanctuary at St. John's. You could also attach a magnet or picture hanger on the cross and place it on your refrigerator or wall. The cross comes in a mesh pouch with a tiny pocket Jesus. The "Fun-Raising" Committee is offering this keepsake item for a donation of at least \$10.00 or more per family. Funds will be used for a future upcoming project at the church. To see the cross and make your purchase, please see Amy Feidler or Carol Raszler every Sunday before or after worship or it can be purchased from the church office.

Pastor Becky Article

Our Pastor Emerita, Rev. Dr. Becky Beckwith, had an article in the "Faith Values" section of the Morning Call on Saturday, September 6. It was entitled "Three Became One." To read this article, you can go online to mcall.com and search Faith Values. Pastor Becky is now serving as Intentional Interim at St. Thomas UCC in Bethlehem.

Prayer that Expresses Our Love

"I urge you, first of all, to pray for all people. Ask God to help them; intercede on their behalf, and give thanks for them... This is good and pleases God our Savior." — 1 Timothy 2:1, 3

Prayer is one of the simplest and most beautiful ways we connect with God and express our love for one another. And everyone can participate. You don't need special words or training — just a willing heart.

At St. John's, prayer happens in many ways. Our Ministry Staff prays for you. Our Prayer Team carries the needs and celebrations of our congregation. Our Visitation and Bereavement Ministries pray with people through seasons of joy, grief, and uncertainty. And our Prayer Shawl Ministry weaves prayers into every shawl and prayer square.

You can be part of this circle of prayer, too.

Each week, place a name, concern, celebration, or gratitude in the Prayer Basket at the Welcome Table. You'll also find our prayer list in the worship bulletin, inviting you to carry these names with you throughout the week.

You can pray silently. You can pray with someone. You can write a prayer or simply hold someone's name in your heart. Every prayer is an opportunity to draw closer to God and closer to one another.

As we pray, we remind one another that no one journeys alone. We open our hearts to God's love and become a tangible expression of that love for others.

Come pray with us. Share your prayers. Carry someone in your heart. And know that you are being carried in prayer, too.

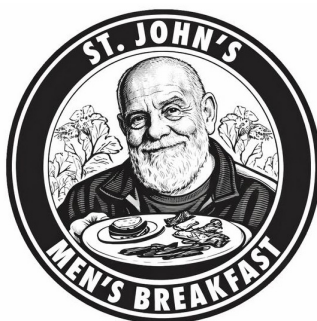
Worship, Love and Serve — No Matter What!



The Lady PEEPS will meet on Tuesday, October 20th at 7pm. We will gather in Fox Hall. Mark your calendars, PEEPS!!

Contact person is Regi Mohr (610-390-0872).

Men's Breakfast Group



The Men's Breakfast Group of St. John's normally meets on the first Saturday of the month at the Hamilton Family Restaurant located at 2027 Hamilton St. in Allentown. Our next meeting will be Saturday, October 3, at 8:30am. We would be pleased to have you join us. If you would like to know more about this group, you can contact Pastor Steve.

Gentlemen, please attend and bring someone!

Gobble, Gobble, Gobble!



During the upcoming holidays, many of you will win turkeys, get them as gifts, or earn them with the supermarket rewards program. If you would like to donate your turkey for our fundraising events, please contact Carol Raszler at (610) 393-7572 to make arrangements.

Your Grocery Shopping Benefits St. John's

Whether you drive to the grocery store to shop, order online, or have your groceries delivered, we all need groceries. Do you realize that by purchasing Giant and Weis gift cards and by saving Redner's register tapes you are contributing money to St. John's?

For every Giant and Weis card sold, the church receives 5% back. You also get discounts for gas at both stores. Gift cards can be purchased through the church office or by seeing Tom Moyer or Carol Raszler every Sunday morning before or after worship.

For every Redner's tape collected, the church receives 1% back from its Save-A-Tape Program. The Redner's tapes can be mailed to the church office or placed in a collection jar found on the table in the lounge area. Please do not roll the tapes or include tapes from other stores. See Karen Stoitsits if you have any questions.

It's an easy way to give financially to the church. Think of St. John's every time you do grocery shopping or need to fill up your car.

GIANT®



Gift Cards

REDNER'S
WAREHOUSE MARKETS

Receipts

**Grocery Shopping =
Giving Back to St. John's**

**Buy Giant and Weis Gift Cards
from St. John's**

➔ You spend the full value.
The church receives a percentage.

**Save your Redner's
Tape**

➔ Redner's donates 1% of your
total back to St. John's!

Every receipt counts. Every grocery trip helps.

Pastie Sale

These traditional turnovers are made by hand at the Mr. Pastie bakery in Pen Argyl and come frozen. If you don't have time to cook, just pop these pasties in the oven for a quick, delicious meal.

Deadline to place your order is Sunday, October 25. An order form is in this newsletter, can be found on the church's website under "Forms," and also on the table in the lounge. Payment is due with your order with checks payable to St. John's UCC, Fullerton. Return your order form and payment to the church office or place it in the offering plate or give it to Carol Raszler. Please be sure to specify your pick-up date on the form—either Thursday, November 19, from 6-8pm or Sunday, November 22, after worship. If you have any questions, contact Carol Raszler at (610) 393-7572 or email craszler@aol.com



Item	Description	Size Cost
Traditional Beef	Ground beef, potatoes, onions	12 oz. \$7.50
Beef (no onion)	Ground beef, potatoes	12 oz. \$7.50
Traditional Chicken	Chicken, peas, carrots, potatoes, onions, gravy	12 oz. \$7.50
Italian Sausage	Pork sausage, green peppers, potatoes, onions	12 oz. \$7.50
Traditional Ham	Naturally-smoked ham, onions, cheddar cheese, potatoes	12 oz. \$8.75
Chicken Cordon Bleu	Chicken, ham, potatoes, Swiss & American cheese, onions	12 oz. \$8.75
Chicken Broccoli Cheddar	Chicken, potatoes, broccoli, onions, cauliflower, cheddar cheese	12 oz. \$8.50
Cheeseburger	Burger, American cheese, onions, potatoes	12 oz. \$8.50
Philly Cheese Steak	Steak, potatoes, pepper, American cheese, onions	12 oz. \$8.50
Mexican Burrito	Beef, beans, cheddar cheese, onions, peppers, tomato, taco sauce	12 oz. \$8.50
Pizza	Pepperoni, sausage, peppers, onions, mozzarella cheese, pizza sauce	12 oz. \$8.50
Veggie Melt Pastie	Peas, carrots, corn, green beans, onions, broccoli, cauliflower, cheddar	12 oz. \$7.50
Spinach Melt Pastie	Spinach, potatoes, onions, cheddar cheese	12 oz. \$7.50
Fruit Turnover Pastie	Choose from apple, cherry, or blueberry	6 oz. \$4.50

Upcoming “Fun-Raising” Events at St. John’s

RaiseRight Gift Cards – Deadline for orders Wednesday, September. 30. See Karen.

30th Annual Road Rally – Sunday, October. 4 – Meet at 1:30pm at Grape St. parking lot. Follow the route and arrive at a restaurant for supper. See DonnaLee Yeatts.

Apple Day – Sunday, October. 11 – Free apples will be given out before or after worship by Andie Dallago in memory of her mother Freda Albright.

Halloween Gift Card Bingo – Friday, October. 16 – Doors open at 6:00pm; games begin at 7:00pm. Food available to purchase. 50/50 & Tricky Tray. \$20 In advance; \$25 at the door. Tickets can be purchased from office or see Tom.

Bosco’s “Friends Helping Friends” – Wednesday, October. 21 – 8:00am to 11:00pm. Purchase a \$5 pass (offering 25% in sales) and the church keeps the funds. See Ginny.

St. John’s Bazaar – Saturday, November. 14 – 9am to 2pm in Fox Hall. Deadline to bring in items you no longer need or want, clean & in working condition is October 31. Look for list of items we will not accept in newsletter or online. See Amy or Carol.

Pastie Sale – Pickup Thursday, November. 19 & Sunday, November. 22 – Order forms available on church’s website & in this newsletter. Deadline for orders Sunday, October. 25. See Carol.

Movie Night & Ice Cream Social – Saturday, December. 11 – 7:00pm – Save the date. Details to follow. See Pastor Steve.

Giant & Weis Gift Cards – Church gets 5% back. See Tom or Carol.

Redner’s Register Tapes – Church gets 1% back. Please do not roll the register tapes or submit receipts from other stores. See Karen.

Applebee’s “Burgers for a Cause” – For a discounted price, this coupon entitles you to a gourmet burger and French fries. Good at any location. No expiration date. See Tom.

“Fun-Raising” Committee Contacts:

Amy Feidler, Chairperson (835) 210-5944

Ginny Brokenshire	(610) 439-0443	Carol Raszler	(610) 393-7572
Bill Castello	(651) 492-1399	Karen Stoitsis	(610) 262-0746
Pastor Steve Davis	(610) 264-8421	Lori Stocker	(610) 703-2666
Brian Fisher	(610) 762-1134	Brian Strauss	(610) 248-9119
Tom Moyer	(610) 432-3372		



October Birthdays

If you have an upcoming birthday or notice an omission, please update the church office.

10/2	Kirby Hower	10/18	Barbara Seyfried
	Joy Gravely	10/19	Jo Ann Sutter
	Linda Smith	10/20	Dee Schlenker
	Riley Kulhamer	10/21	Nicole Fox
10/3	Eireann Hunsicker	10/23	Isabella Pagan
	Patricia Schaffer	10/24	Robert Dougherty
10/4	Michael Buskirk	10/25	Brinlee Neitz
10/5	Bailey Kulhamer		David Brown
10/6	Joan Phillips		Michael Baatz
10/7	Charles Schwenk	10/27	Donna Herring
	Mark Geroulo Sr		Marlene Kocher
10/8	Gary D Neitz	10/28	Janet Miller
	Janice Walenta		Kristine Gersbach
10/9	Gary Hallman		Barbara Menges
	Ann Patterson		Randy Schlenker
	Randy Bachman	10/30	Carol Olson
10/11	Kendal Clewell		Nancy Keister
10/13	Abby Chryst Hoffman		Melanie Beck
10/15	Rev. Evelyn Stupp		Jacob Powell
	Barbara Seeds	10/31	Arbula Dotter
10/17	Amy Feidler		
	Andria Dallago		



October Wedding Anniversaries

If you have an upcoming anniversary or notice an omission, please update the church office.

10/1	10/18
Kevin and Melody Fox	Elwood and Patricia Thompson
10/9	10/20
Ronald and Ann Patterson	William and Kathy Roth
10/10	10/22
Kirby and Lorraine Hower	Abby Chryst Hoffman
10/10	10/23
Kevin and Kaitlyn Weidner	William and Beverly Rumble
10/14	10/24
Christopher and Jennifer Kuhns	Todd and Jean Fennell
10/14	10/27
Jeffrey and Barbara Seeds	Michael and Joy Gravely
10/16	10/30
Brian and Tracy Fisher	Keith and Susan Kaider





Neighbors in Need

"Walk in love, as Christ loved us." ~ Ephesians 5:2



This scripture is the theme for Neighbors in Need (NIN) this year. Ephesians was written by the Apostle Paul commanding those who believe to live a life of active, sacrificial love modeled after Jesus Christ. When we come together as a church to do work of justice and advocacy, we are acting out of the hope that love can change the world. Believers are called to walk in love, following Christ's example.

Two-thirds of the NIN offering is used by UCC's Justice

and Witness Ministries to support a variety of justice initiatives, advocacy efforts, and direct service projects through grants. These grants are awarded to UCC churches and organizations doing justice work in their communities. The grants fund projects whose work range from direct service to community organizing and advocacy to address systemic injustice.

One-third of the NIN offering supports the Council for American Indian Ministry (CAIM). It has been witnessing to Native values and culture as a vital part of the UCC since 1971.

Enclosed with this newsletter is a special offering envelope and insert. The NIN offering will be received at worship on Sunday, October 4, and continue to the end of October.

Whitehall Food Pantry

For the month of October, we are collecting cans of spaghetti sauce. In addition, from October to December we are looking for boxed or packaged stuffing mix for the patrons' holiday meals. Place the items in the shopping cart found in the coat room area by the sanctuary. Monetary donations as well as other canned goods are always welcome.

A wonderful article about the Whitehall Food Pantry appeared recently in the Whitehall Township Spring 2026 Newsletter. You can find the article by going to whitehalltownship.org, click "General Information" and scroll down to "Newsletter."

When we Serve, we make a Difference! Our church is proud to be a continuing contributor to the Whitehall Food Pantry. Should you consider volunteering in the morning or evening on the 4th Monday of the month, please contact Gary Black at (484) 274-2405 or gary.t.black@outlook.com

Greater Allentown CROP Hunger Walk



CROP Hunger Walks are community-led interfaith events that raise funds to end hunger locally and around the world. This year's CROP Hunger Walk is scheduled for Sunday, October 18, starting at 1:30 p.m. at St. Timothy's Lutheran Church

located at 140 S. Ott Street in Allentown. Walkers are needed and church members can sponsor our walkers with your donations. There are two options for walkers – A 10K route and the "Golden Mile" route through the Hamilton Park neighborhood.

The CROP Hunger Walk helps food-insecure neighbors locally through the Lehigh Conference of Churches Kitchen and the Allentown Area Ecumenical Food Bank. CROP Walk funds also support Church World Service's life-saving disaster assistance, displacement assistance, and long-term development assistance with our neighbors throughout the United States and around the globe.

If you would like to make a contribution to the CROP Walk, sponsor one of our walkers, or be a walker, please see Cindy Reck before or after worship. **Checks should be made payable to CWS/ CROP with "CROP Hunger Walk Sponsor" in the memo section. Special offering envelopes will be placed in the bulletin on September 27 and October 11.**

The Mission Committee is coordinating this event with our Healthcare Ministry and its Walking Challenge event. The Walking Challenge started on Sunday, September 20, and will end on Saturday, October 17.

Whitehall-Coplay Hunger Initiative

WCHI and the Faith-Based Community are providing free meals to low-income Whitehall-Coplay households on the 1st Sunday and 3rd Tuesday of each month from 4:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. WCHI will post a meal reminder on Facebook and Instagram and state if it is an inside sit-down meal, take out, or a version of both. The meal being served will also be posted. For more information or to volunteer, please contact Karen Haberern, Program Chair, at (610) 730-3184. The host churches are as follows:

Date	Place	Address	Phone
Sunday, 10/4	Faith Evangelical Lutheran Church	3355 MacArthur Rd., Whitehall	(610) 435-0451
Tuesday, 10/20	Shepherd of the Hills Lutheran Church (Meal provided by Whitehall Lions)	4331 Main St., Whitehall	(610) 730-3184
Sunday, 11/1	St. John's the Baptist (Social Hall)	3034 S. Ruch St., Coplay	(610) 730-3114
Tuesday, 11/17	St. John's Lutheran Church (Meal provided by Samuel Owens Rest.)	18 S. Third St., Coplay	(484) 695-3696

Other Outreaches

The goal of \$20,000 was overwhelmingly surpassed for the “Love Your Neighborhood Churches” Fundraiser for Medical Debt Relief, sponsored by 14 churches (across 4 denominations) throughout the Lehigh and Northampton counties. A recent update on September 9 listed the contributions so far at **\$51,403.04. This means that about six million dollars was erased in Medical Debt.** Please read the article in this newsletter to learn more.

Mitten Tree “Operation Santa” Coming Soon

More information will be in the November newsletter. The Mission Committee will give you details on how to make Christmas brighter for those less fortunate as we begin our “Operation Santa” outreach for Phoebe Ministries (seniors) and Valley Youth House (children and teens). Look for the “Mitten Tree” in the lounge area next month.

How did St. John’s Family do?

Recent Outreaches	August 2026	YTD 2026	YTD 2025	YTD 2024
Our Church’s Wider Mission	\$ 708.00	\$5,690.00	\$7,835.00	\$8,703.00
Whitehall Food Pantry	\$ 285.00	\$1,321.99	\$1,606.99	\$2,228.00
Mountain Valley Assoc.	\$ 125.00	\$ 755.00	N/A	N/A
Medical Debt Relief	\$ 75.00	\$ 585.00*	N/A	N/A

Mission Outreach giving for August 2026 totaled \$1,193.00 and YTD giving totaled \$9,899.79.

* At the request of the Mission Committee, St. John’s has contributed \$500.00 to Medical Debt Relief from the 10% tithing from fundraisers in 2026.

Medical Debt Relief Fundraiser a Huge Success

Our goal for the “Love Your Neighbor Churches” Medical Debt Relief Fundraiser was \$20,000, but we are overwhelmed to report that contributions far exceeded our goal by receiving over \$45,000. (As of September 9, an update on donations was at \$51,403.04.) This means that approximately \$6 million in medical debt will be erased. Hopefully, we will soon receive a final report as to the exact funds raised, the amount of debt erased, and where it’s going in Lehigh and Northampton counties and beyond. Within a few weeks letters will be sent to the recipients.



The culmination of the fundraiser happened with a picnic celebration at Union UCC in Neffs on Sunday, August 16. People came to enjoy a free meal prepared by several churches and to listen to The Pour Boys band who donated their services. Participants could enter in a raffle for gift cards, a handmade quilt, and a new generator donated by members and businesses that brought in \$1,800. Although it rained for the entire event, it didn’t stop our picnic goers from experiencing a time of fellowship, hospitality, generosity, and blessings from God.

Thank you to everyone who donated towards “Love You Neighbor Churches.” St. John’s contributed \$585.00 of which \$500.00 was from the 10% tithing from this year’s fundraisers. Members gave through church offerings and others may have contributed directly online to United Medical Debt.

Thank you to Rev. Kris Snyder, pastor at Union UCC, for organizing the event. Thank you to the pastors and 14 churches (including 4 denominations) who said “yes” to a new mission effort and a new way of doing something together with other churches. God’s spirit was palpable and contagious throughout this effort and at the picnic. We hope this may continue to be so for each of our congregations and those who came to journey with us.

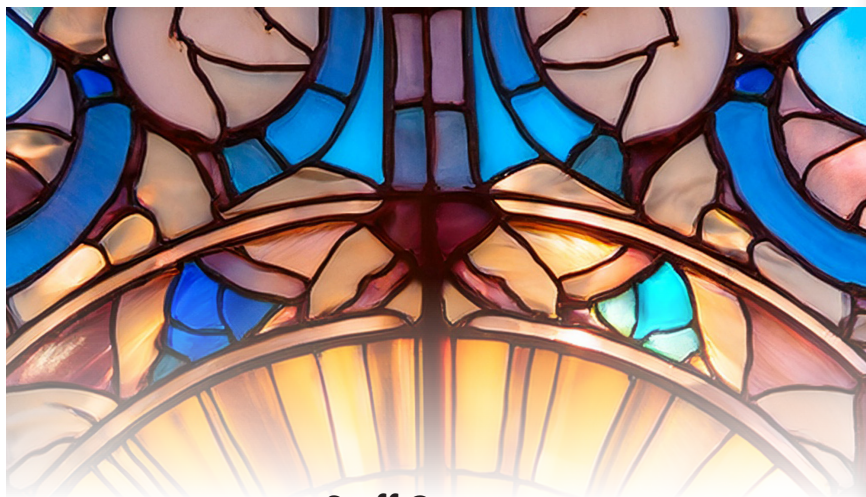
- Portions of this article were written by Rev. Kris Snyder, Pastor at Union UCC, Neffs.
- For a story by reporter Gavin Cerco, google Lehigh Valley Press News (Parkland Press) at lvpress.com entitled “[Local Churches Raise \\$45,000 to Erase \\$6 Million in Medical Debt for Lehigh Valley.](#)”
- For pictures and a video of the event, go to Facebook and search for postings from Pastor Steve and Pastor Kris Snyder.



BUDGET UPDATE

St Johns UCC Fullerton - Statement of Finances							
Aug 2026							
Income	Electronic	8/2/2026	8/9/2026	8/16/2026	8/23/2026	8/30/2026	Total
Offerings for Operating Expenses	\$5,588.05	\$5,540.00	\$1,761.00	\$1,689.00	\$1,562.00	\$1,635.00	\$17,775.05
Rental Income--Gross	\$1,335.50		\$40.00			\$33.00	\$1,408.50
Fundraising Income--Net of Exp	\$(1,153.74)		\$10.00			\$30.00	\$(1,113.74)
Endowment Interest							\$0.00
Flowers			\$50.00	\$25.00	\$50.00	\$90.00	\$215.00
Faith Formation	\$25.00						\$25.00
Special Gifts							\$0.00
Total	\$5,794.81	\$5,540.00	\$1,861.00	\$1,714.00	\$1,612.00	\$1,788.00	\$18,309.81
Expense Summary		Actual		Budget		Difference	
Pastoral Services		\$12,057.30		\$14,297.32		\$(2,240.02)	
Staff Salaries & Expense		\$9,021.04		\$9,517.97		\$(496.93)	
Building Services		\$5,309.06		\$5,256.25		\$52.81	
Faith Formation		\$9.08		\$104.17		\$(95.09)	
Parish Programs		\$1,541.83		\$2,110.42		\$(568.59)	
Fundraising Tithe		\$0.00		\$0.00		\$0.00	
Total		\$27,938.31		\$31,286.12		\$(3,347.81)	
			Month	Year			
			Total Income	\$18,309.81	\$209,915.72		
			Total Expenses	\$27,938.31	\$222,298.45		
*****		Net INCOME (LOSS)	\$(9,628.50)	\$(12,382.73)	*****		
Mission Giving, Aug 2026							
Our Churches Wider Mission			\$708.00				
Mountain Valley Assoc			\$285.00				
Medical Debt Relief			\$75.00				
Whitehall Food Pantry			\$125.00				
Total			\$1,193.00				
			St John's UCC Fullerton				
			Account Balances				
			For Month Ending, Aug 2026				
Account		Jul-26		Aug-26		Difference	
Checking Account		\$136,873.58		\$90,544.70		\$(46,328.88)	
Giant Card Funds		\$2,657.00		\$1,837.00		\$(820.00)	
Weis Card Funds		\$21.00		\$696.00		\$675.00	
sub-total Checking		\$139,551.58		\$93,077.70		\$(46,473.88)	
Restricted/Property Investments		\$241,225.00		\$241,920.00		\$695.00	
sub-total Investments		\$241,225.00		\$241,920.00		\$695.00	
Endowment Fund--Quadrant		\$1,021,823.00		\$1,039,467.00		\$17,644.00	
TOTAL ASSETS		\$1,402,599.58		\$1,374,464.70		\$(28,134.88)	
Cornerstone Pavillion Loan		\$(80,010.48)		\$(79,884.72)		\$125.76	
TOTAL LIABILITES		\$(80,010.48)		\$(79,884.72)		\$125.76	
NET FUND BALANCE		\$1,322,589.10		\$1,294,579.98		\$(28,009.12)	





Staff Contacts

Rev. Steve Davis

Senior Pastor

srpastor@sjuccf.org

Patrick Sandt

Director of Music Ministry / Organist

music@sjuccf.org

Samara Bush

Office Administrator

officesecretary@sjuccf.org

Sue Weldner

Treasurer

sbweldner@gmail.com

Michelle Gutekunst

Financial Secretary

Coordinating Custodian

financialsecretary@sjuccf.org

custodians@sjuccf.org

Bill Castello

Worship Tech

Connections Newsletter Editor

stars@sjuccf.org

newsletter@sjuccf.org

Samantha Kistler

Ecclesiastical Council Survivor

samanthamkistler@gmail.com

Christina Bach

Custodian

ironton1@verizon.net

Jazmin Smith

Director St. John's

Christian Early Learning Center

staff@stjohnslearningcenter.com

www.stjohnsuccfullerton.org

575 Grape Street, Whitehall, PA 18052 (610) 264-8421

Remembering Freda Albright



On Sunday, October 11, Freda's daughter Andria Dallago will hand out apples to everyone who comes to worship in memory of her mom.

Freda loved her small little hometown of Biglerville, PA, just a stone's throw from Gettysburg. It is also known as "Apple Country." In the summer she and her brothers and sisters would always work at picking all kinds of fruit. Every year around Freda's birthday, the family would make their way back to her "sacred ground" and to Hollabaugh Brothers Fruit Farm for a large bag of apples. She always said that when the time comes, she wanted to be taken back to Biglerville to rest.

Freda was born on October 8, 1938. She was a library aide at Steckel Elementary School in Whitehall for over 40 years. Along with her husband Larry, they had been proprietors of a Carvel Ice Cream store on MacArthur Rd. Freda taught herself how to play the piano and loved doing ceramics and gardening. In addition to being a member of The Order of the Eastern Star, she served as a Sunday School teacher at St. John's and was a member of the prayer chain. Freda passed away on April 10, 2024 at the age of 85.